

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 211103Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6272

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, EG, LE, SY,SF

SUBJ: CAIRO PRESS ON LEBANON AND SUMMIT

1. THE SUMMIT. REPORTS ON PROGRESS TOWARDS ARAB SUMMIT
TOOK BACK SEAT TO MILITARY AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON
IN CAIRO PRESS AUGUST 21. ACCORDING TO AHRAM, FONMIN FAHMY
WILL BEGIN CONTRACTS IN NEXT TWO DAYS AS RESULT SAUDI-
EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT TO COORDINATE EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT
SUMMIT. SUCCESS, IN EGYPTIAN VIEW, SAID TO DEPEND ON BIG
"IFS" OF PROPER PLANNING FOR THE CONFERENCE AND ABILITY OF
ARABS TO PUT ASIDE DIFFERENCES UNRELATED TO LEBANON.

2. LEBANESE AND SYRIANS. REPORT FROM BEIRUT SAYS GROUP
CALLED "POPULAR RESISTANCE" CLAIMS SYRIANS HAVE ARRESTED
700 PERSONS IN BEQAA VALLEY AND HAULED THEN OFF TO SYRIA
"FOR QUESTIONING". ARTICLE SPECULATED GROUP IS AMALGAM
OF RADICAL PALESTINANS. ASF COMMANDER GHONAYM REPORTEDLY
PRESSING TRUCE PLAN ON LEFTISTS, URGING JUMBLATT
TO ACQUIESCE TO LEFTIST-PALESTINIAN WITHDRAWAL
FROM MOUNTAINS. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, GHONAYM
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PROPOSES CREATE BUFFER ZONE BY REPLACING PALESTINIAN

FORCES WITH AL TROOPS. PALESTINIANS SAID TO BE DEMANDING ASSURANCES OF SYRIAN PULLBACK AS QUID PRO QUP.

3. MEANWHILE, CHRISTIANS REPORTED TO BE HOLDING OFF ON MAJOR ATTACK IN MOUNTAINS PENDING CLARIFICATION OF SYRIAN INTENTIONS. LEADING FRONT PAGE STORIES TREAT SITUATION OMINOUSLY AS "IMPENDING SHOWDOWN". AKHBAR ELYOM HIGHLIGHTS VIEW OF "DIPLOMATIC SOURCES" THAT, IN EVENT POLITICAL SOLUTION NOT ARRIVED AT BY SEPTEMBER 15, SYRIANS INTEND MASSIVE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST PALESTINIANS AND LEFTISTS. GUMHURRIYA BANNER SCREAMS OUTRAGE AGAINST ALLEGED ESTABLISHMENT BY SYRIANS AND FALANGISTS OF DAMASCUS OFFICE TO RECRUIT MERCENARIES FOR RIGHTIST FORCES.

4. COMMENTARY. ANODYNE GUMHURRIYA EDITORIAL ON POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF SAUDI-EGYPTIAN COORDINATION ON SUMMIT OFFSET BY AKHBAR CHAIRMAN AMIN'S ARTICLE BEWAILING ARAB SELF-DESTRUCTIVENESS. HE NOTES ARAB ENCOURAGEMENT OF ISRAEL, NOTABLY SYRIA'S ATTACKS ON SINAI II AND ITS ELIMINATION OF PALESTINIANS AS "POWER WHICH ISRAEL HAD OFTERN DREADED".

5. LEBANESE IN EGYPT. LEBANESE EMBOFF TOLD US HIS EMBASSY AGREES WITH GOE FIGURE OF 16,138 LEBANESE PRESENT HERE AS "TOURISTS OR TEMPORARY RESIDENTS" AS OF AUGUST 1. LEBANESE EMBOFF BELIEVES MOST ARE AT LEAST REASONABLY WELL OFF AND POINTEDLY DOES NOT CALL THEM "REFUGEES".
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